

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 868

By Williams

A RESOLUTION to honor Speaker Beth Harwell for her exemplary service to this General Assembly and the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is most fitting that this body should pause to recognize one of the most dedicated, most effective, and longest-serving elected officials this State has ever produced, namely one Beth Harwell of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, having proudly represented her district in Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County for the last thirty years, Speaker Harwell has announced her retirement from the House of Representatives, after building a legacy in public service that is second to none; and

WHEREAS, for thirty years, the citizens of House District 56 have counted on Beth Harwell to represent their values and concerns at the State Capitol, and she has done so ably while still maintaining her focus on matters of statewide importance; and

WHEREAS, first elected to the 96th General Assembly, Beth Harwell capped her illustrious legislative career by serving as the first female Speaker in Tennessee history, leading the House of Representatives for the past eight years (107th, 108th, 109th, and 110th General Assemblies); and

WHEREAS, Speaker Harwell's leadership has been instrumental in the first Republican majority since Reconstruction attaining its goals for a leaner government with less bureaucracy and red tape and greater transparency and efficiency; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Harwell has proven to be an effective Speaker, working with legislators and the governor for the benefit of all Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Harwell has expertly balanced the big picture with the devilish details to lead Tennessee confidently through the second decade of the twenty-first century; and

WHEREAS, an old school legislator who eschews the pop-culture aspirations of contemporary politicians to work toward real goals for real people, Beth Harwell served as chair of the House Commerce Committee for the 106th General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, tributes to her excellence as a legislator are far too numerous to mention; of the many awards she has received, the Harold Bradley Legislative Leadership Award, the American Cancer Society Legislative Leadership Award, the Champion for Children Award, the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce's "Champion of Commerce" Award, and the Junior League Legislator of the Year Award are especially dear to her; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Harwell has always been a friend of small business and has twice been awarded the coveted "Guardian of Small Business Award" by the National Federation of Independent Businesses; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Harwell has been an active member of her community as a member of the Tennessee State Museum Foundation, the Douglas Henry State Museum Commission Board, the Lipscomb University Advisory Council, the Mental Health America of Middle Tennessee Board of Directors, the Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation, and an alumna of Leadership Nashville and Leadership Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, she previously served as the president of the National Speakers Conference and has served on the Board of Directors for Agape, the American Heart Association, the Exchange Club Family Center, the Centennial Medical Center, the Knowles Senior Citizens Center, PearlPoint Cancer Support, and the Nashville Children's Theater; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Harwell currently serves on the Montgomery Bell Academy Board of Directors and the Jobs for Tennessee Graduates Board of Directors, and as Chair of the TCAT Nashville General Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, always seeking to expand her party's influence, she has served on the Republican Legislative Campaign Committee Executive Committee and is currently Co-Chair of the Republican State Leadership Committee's Right Women Right Now initiative; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Beth Harwell has set the standard for present and future legislative leadership, and her legacy of government of, by, and for the people is the crowning achievement of her brilliant career in the General Assembly; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor Speaker Beth Harwell for her thirty years of distinguished service as a member of this General Assembly and her outstanding eight years of leadership as Speaker of the House, commend her ongoing commitment to the health and prosperity of all Tennesseans, and wish her all the best as she continues her remarkable life's journey.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we recognize and pay tribute to Beth Harwell as the first female Speaker in Tennessee history.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.